

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00

USIE-00 INRE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02 NSC-05 PA-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 AID-05 NIC-01 COME-00 DOTE-00

EB-07 FMC-01 CG-00 OFA-01 DLOS-03 SAB-01 /068 W

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FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7650

INFO AMEMBASSY PANAMA

AMCONSULATE CALI

AMCONSULATE MEDELLIN

C O N F I D E N T I A L BOGOTA 2599

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, CO, PN, US

SUBJECT: PRESS SPECULATION ON COLOMBIAN TRANSIT RIGHTS IN PANAMA

1. THERE HAS, ON THE EVE OF THE PRESIDENTIAL MEETING IN PANAMA, BEEN SUBSTANTIAL PRESS SPECULATION ON THE FORM AND NATURE OF FUTURE COLOMBIAN TRANSIT RIGHTS ON THE ISTHMUS. THE PANAMANIAN AMBASSADOR IN BOGOTA HAS RECENTLY RAISED THE ISSUE, STATING THAT PANAMA WOULD, IN THE FUTURE, CONTINUE TO GRANT TRANSIT RIGHTS TO COLOMBIA.

2. WE EXPECT FURTHER ATTENTION TO THIS MATTER IN LOCAL CIRCLES FOLLOWING THE CONCLUSION OF THE PANAMA MEETING AND THE HIGHLY PROBABLE ISSUANCE OF SOME SORT OF PRONOUNCEMENT ON THE CANAL QUESTION BY THE FOUR PRESIDENTS.

3. FOR THE PRESENT, WE WILL USE THE FOLLOWING GUIDANCE (PARAS 4 AND 5) ON AN "IF ASKED" BASIS ONLY.

4. U.S. INTENTIONS IN REGARD TO THE URRUTIA-THOMPSON TREATY. THE U.S. WILL, OF COURSE, CONTINUE TO HONOR ITS TREATY OBLIGATIONS TO COLOMBIA. THE U.S. AND PANAMA ARE NOW IN THE PROCESS OF NEGOTIATING A COMPREHENSIVE NEW TREATY TO GOVERN CANAL OPERATIONS. THE

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ING A COMPREHENSIVE NEW TREATY TO GOVERN CANAL OPERATIONS. THE

UNITED STATES IS AWARE OF ITS OBLIGATIONS TO COLOMBIA AND WILL
CONSULT WITH THE GOC AT THE APPROPRIATE STAGE OF THE NEGOTIATIONS.

5. PANAMANIAN POSITION ON GUARANTEE OF TRANSIT RIGHTS TO COLOMBIA.
WE DO NOT CONSIDER IT APPROPRIATE TO COMMENT AT THIS TIME ON THE
PANAMANIAN POSITION ON THIS ISSUE.

6. WE WILL, DEPENDING ON THE CONTENT OF ANY STATEMENT ON CANAL
POLICY BY THE FOUR PRESIDENTS AT PANAMA, ADJUST OUR GUIDANCE
ACCORDINGLY. WE WOULD ALSO APPRECIATE ANY ADDITIONAL POLICY
GUIDANCE THAT THE DEPARTMENT MAY WISH TO PROVIDE.
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